



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Chief Justice to speak to Mountain State Bar** **For immediate release Tuesday, May 17, 2011**

FAIRMONT, W.Va. – Chief Justice Margaret L. Workman will be the luncheon speaker at the Mountain State Bar Association's 2011 Annual Continuing Legal Education Seminar.

She will speak at noon Friday, May 20, at the Falcon Center on Fairmont State University's Campus, 1201 Locust Avenue, Fairmont.

She will talk about "What's happening at your state Supreme Court."

In 1988, Chief Justice Workman was the first woman elected to the Supreme Court and the first woman elected to a statewide office.

A native West Virginian, she received her law degree in 1974 from the West Virginia University College of Law. She served as assistant majority counsel to the U.S. Senate Public Works Committee, chaired by Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia. She returned to West Virginia to work as a law clerk to the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit (Kanawha County). In 1976 she served as an advance person in the Carter Presidential Campaign and later worked on the campaign staff of U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller.

In 1981, Chief Justice Workman became the youngest circuit court judge in the state when then-Governor Rockefeller appointed her to the Kanawha County Circuit Court; she ran successfully for the unexpired term in 1982 and the full term in 1984. As a circuit judge, she inherited West Virginia's largest backlog of cases, and during her tenure on the court reduced it to the lowest level in the judicial circuit. She held more jury trials than any other circuit judge in the state during the same period. She also visited every prison and secure juvenile correctional facility in the state.

After her election to the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Workman served as chief justice in 1993 and 1997. During her time as Chief Justice, she fostered a close working relationship between the court system and domestic violence programs, and she visited many shelters to learn how the court system could be more effective in addressing domestic violence. Chief Justice Workman created the Task Force on Gender Fairness in the Courts and the Task Force on the Future of the Judiciary. She formed the Broadwater Committee, which made reform in the court system's responses to children's issues and spearheaded the development of rules governing child abuse and neglect cases.

In her current tenure as Chief Justice, she is focusing on improving rehabilitation services for juveniles.

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